



TIPS FOR THE FESTIVE EATER

Did you know that most people gain 2 – 5 pounds each year between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day? Fret not, we've got the food and diet tips you need in order to keep your festive dining under control.

1. **Shift your focus.** If you've been trying to lose weight, concentrate on weight maintenance. You won't feel pressured to lose weight during the holiday season and you won't feel deprived as others celebrate. This will make it easier to maintain your calorie intake.
2. **Snack before you party.** Have a healthy snack before going to a holiday gathering. This way you won't be as hungry and will be satisfied with smaller portions.
3. **Enjoy the small things.** Portion control is critical to prevent weight gain. Sample small portions of foods high in fat and calories. Share a dessert, limit alcohol, and fill up on more nutritious selections like turkey breast and vegetables.
4. **Keep your hands busy.** Keep a calorie-free beverage in your hand at cocktail parties. This keeps your hands from mindlessly reaching into snack bowls and food trays.
5. **Don't stand near the buffet or appetizers at a holiday gathering.** Instead, survey the offerings, choose the best nutritional bets and maybe one high-calorie sample, put them on a plate, then go sit down and enjoy the meal.
6. **Keep moving.** Finding time for daily physical activity is one of the most important strategies to avoid holiday weight gain. Do everything you can to maintain your routine and fit in fitness each day.

Healthy side of holidays

Many foods that we associate with the holidays are actually good for you. Just be sure to mind your portions and look for no- or low-sugar varieties:

- **Applesauce.** A good source of fiber. Remember to look for unsweetened or natural applesauce.
- **Cheese.** Provides calcium and protein. Look for low-fat varieties.
- **Cranberry sauce (unsweetened).** Cranberries are rich in vitamin C and believed to contain excellent infection-fighting properties. Add a minimal amount of sugar or use artificial sweetener.
- **Fruit.** Always a good snack choice during the holidays. Packed with vitamins, antioxidants, and fiber, fruit will fill you up and provide energy to keep you going.

HUMANA
Guidance when you need it most

- **Green beans.** String beans contain vitamin K (for healthy bones), vitamin C, and vitamin A. Try tossing with olive oil and lemon juice for a healthier alternative to butter or cream sauce.
- **Nuts.** Nuts are a great source of protein and are full of heart-healthy unsaturated fat, vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients. Portion control is key.
- **Pumpkin.** Contains carotenoids for making vitamin A and fighting free radicals. Also a good source of potassium and fiber. Use an artificial sweetener instead of sugar for a lower calorie dessert.
- **Yams/Sweet potatoes.** Similar to pumpkin, yams contain carotenoids, potassium, vitamin C, and fiber. Steer clear of the candied variety and simply bake with a bit of brown sugar or with artificial sweetener.

Merry makeovers

Do a healthy makeover to your favorite dishes to help cut back on fat, sodium, and calories, but not on flavor:

- Use low-sodium broth to add flavor to your dishes instead of milk, butter, and salt. Use in mashed potatoes, gravy, and even in your vegetables.
- Roast your vegetables to bring out their natural flavor. Or steam your vegetables and add flavor with herbs.
- Prepare your favorite dips using fat-free sour cream or even plain yogurt.
- Cook your stuffing separately from the turkey to prevent the turkey fat from soaking into the dressing. Use less butter or margarine when preparing the stuffing.
- Choose light meat over dark meat.
- Substitute heart-healthy canola oil for butter and margarine.
- Consider lean pork tenderloin for holiday meals instead of fattier or saltier meats.
- Instead of dessert or candy, offer fruit or chocolate-dipped whole strawberries.

We hope these tips help maintain your diet this holiday season. That way, you can focus on the love and comfort of family and friends — the true meaning behind happy holidays.

Source:

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